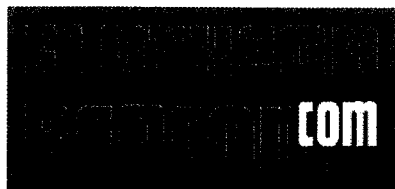


Exhibit No. 13Date 3-4-11Bill No. SB 343

LEGISLATION SETS UP PREVENTION CAMPAIGN FOR ZEBRA AND QUAGGA MUSSELS

Jackson's Bill Fights Invasive Mussels

By Dan Testa, 3-06-09

Kalispell Republican Sen. Verdel Jackson was at work this morning making his case before the Senate Finance and Claims Committee that his bill to fight two invasive mussel species is worth its price tag of more than \$330,000 a year. Jackson's Senate Bill 343, titled, "The Montana Invasive Species Act," would establish a statewide, comprehensive, aquatic invasive species plan involving education and awareness, prevention and emergency response procedures, check stations, setting up management areas, and other measures.

The species at issue are the quagga mussel and zebra mussel, invasive freshwater bivalves brought over to North America from the Black and Caspian Seas.

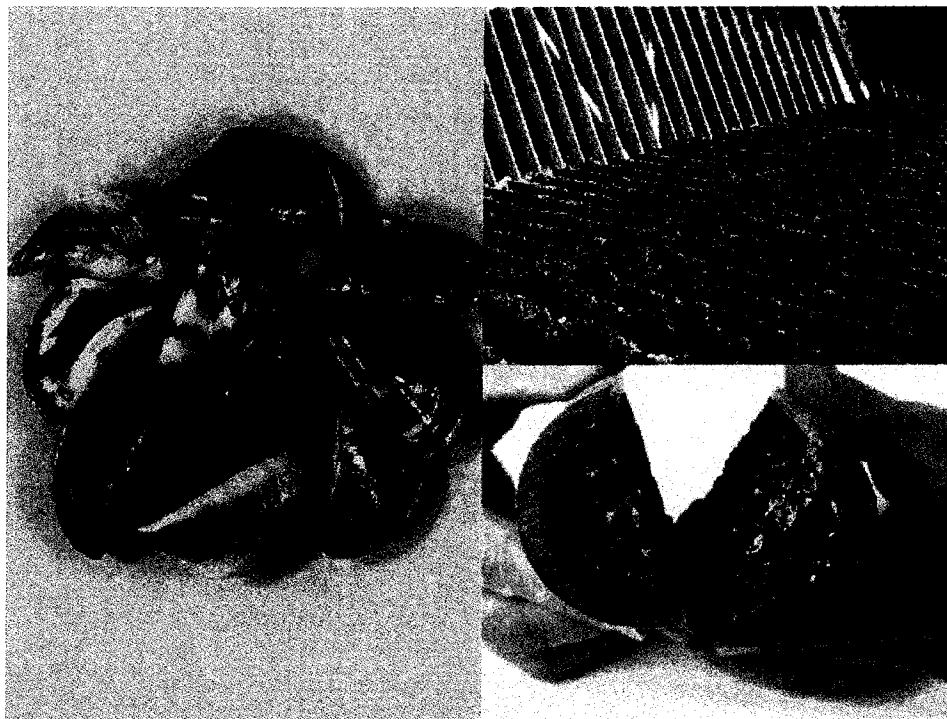
These mussels have no natural predators, and they reproduce so rapidly that they can quickly encrust just about anything, from drainage pipes, to boat cooling systems. They even attach to native mussels and other aquatic life, killing them. These mussels have infested much of the Mississippi River drainage and Great Lakes, but Jackson's bill, brought at the request of the Flathead Lakers, is a part of the "100th Meridian Initiative," a partnership among government agencies and water quality groups to prevent the zebra and quagga mussels from spreading into the western half of the United States.

None of these mussels have turned up in Montana yet, but Jackson said he is concerned it's only a matter of time until a fishing tournament or other recreational activity here draws some boats from midwestern lakes with these mussels or their microscopic larvae stuck to its hull or hidden somewhere on a piece of equipment.

"Without the cooperation of the general boating public, we won't be successful," Jackson said. "We want to get everybody watching for these mussels because they're easy to see."

Jackson's bill would run management of the mussel prevention program through the Department of Agriculture, and its price tag includes the cost of two new employees to tackle the issue. Signs would be erected at boating ramps across the state, along with other educational initiatives to raise awareness of the mussel problem and how to identify them. Inspectors would check watercraft at all fishing events, especially out-of-state boats. If there was an infestation somewhere, a management area would be established to stop it, and the bill would give the governor the ability to exercise his emergency powers to deal with the problem.

While he concedes the bill is pricey, Jackson questions whether it will be enough to combat the mussels, should they turn up in Montana. But in working on the bill, Jackson said some private sector businesses have expressed a willingness to help out on the prevention effort.



Caption: Photos from U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

"I've heard some indications that there is interest from people to donate to this fund," Jackson said. "Power companies could have an expensive clean-up bill on their equipment if these mussels get established."

The bill passed the Senate overwhelmingly with 47 votes and would be included in the general fund budget, depending on what the Senate Finance and Claims Committee decides.

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